

Victoria Police Manual

The Victoria Police Manual is issued under the authority of the Chief Commissioner in s.60, Victoria Police Act 2013. Non-compliance with or a departure from the Victoria Police Manual may be subject to management or disciplinary action. Employees must use the Code of Conduct – Professional and Ethical Standards to inform the decisions they make to support compliance.

OHS Incident management

Context

To ensure all incidents are effectively responded to, incident data must be recorded and analysed. Risk reduction considerations must also be identified and implemented.

All workplace health and safety incidents and 'near misses', including those that relate to employees, persons in police care or custody, visitors or other people present in the workplace, must be reported to the Work Unit Manager or Supervisor. The information gathered through reporting the incident and the establishment of risk controls contributes to:

- Ensuring subsequent incidents of that type are avoided;
- Reducing health and safety risks to employees, contractors and the public;
- The overall health and safety knowledge of the organisation; and
- Developing mechanisms for resolving similar OHS issues.

Policy at a glance

This policy includes:

- initial action for OHS incidents
- reporting, recording and notification requirements for OHS incidents
- requirement to notify WorkSafe Victoria immediately following a notifiable incident
- requirements for employee support following an OHS incident
- requirements regarding first aid qualification
- responsibilities of First Aid officers regarding treatment and emergency evacuations.

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Definitions

Incident: an event that results in a person's injury, illness (including injury or illness of a psychological nature) or death; or serious malfunction or damage to equipment, buildings or property, or environmental factors that had the potential to cause injury or illness to an employee, contractor, or person in police care or custody.

Near Miss: a situation where an incident could have occurred that had the potential to cause injury or illness, including injury of a psychological nature.

Workplace: a place, whether or not in a building or structure where employees or self-employed persons work, including any location where work duties are undertaken.

Scope and application

This policy applies to all Victoria Police employees. For the purposes of this policy, 'employees' include recruits. The content aims to assist the organisation in its provision and management of a workplace that is without risk to health and safety, as far as is reasonably practicable to all employees, visitors, and contractors.

This policy applies to all Victoria Police workplaces. Due to the nature of operational policing, a workplace may include police premises and infrastructure, police vehicles, and any other place where work duties are undertaken.

OHS Incident Reporting and Investigation

1. Recording and Reporting

All workplace health and safety incidents and near misses must be appropriately reported. This ensures Victoria Police meets its legislative requirements and enables the organisation to learn from the incidents, identify causal factors and prevent their recurrence as far as reasonably practicable.

- The following must be reported to a supervisor and recorded on HR Assist in a timely manner:
 - Incident; and
 - Near Miss.
- All incidents, including near misses, must be recorded on HR Assist within 24 hours of the incident occurring. Work Unit Managers must adopt a proactive risk management approach to health and safety incident management and prevention, and promote a 'no fault' approach to reporting.

- Incidents that involve persons in police care or custody must follow immediate notification process as per **VPM Death or serious injury/illness incidents involving police** and section 3.4, **VPM Complaints**.
- Work Unit Managers must ensure that notifiable incidents are reported immediately to both WorkSafe Victoria via telephone and also in writing within 48 hours and to the HSW-SAFETY-OPERATIONS-MGR PBEA. This includes matters involving persons in police care or custody.

2. Initial Action

Employees must respond to a health and safety incident or near miss immediately provided it is safe to do so. Initially, employees involved must:

- Provide assistance to person/s involved, if safe to do so.
- If required to provide first aid assistance, do so:
 - with a reasonable degree of care; and
 - within the limitations of any training received.
- Eliminate or isolate any remaining hazards.
- Notify appropriate emergency or Victoria Police support services as required.
- In the case of a WorkSafe Victoria notifiable incident, notify WorkSafe Victoria and preserve the site (see section 4 below).
- Notify the relevant Work Unit Manager or Supervisor and commence the reporting and investigation process (see section 3.1 below).

3. Incident reporting and investigation

- The Work Unit Manager or Supervisor is responsible for conducting OHS incident and near miss investigations outlined in this section.
- OHS investigations should commence as soon as practicable after the incident being reported.
- Responsibilities should be assigned to ensure corrective actions are completed in a timely manner.

3.1 *Incident response and risk management*

- All incidents should be followed up with an immediate, effective response and first aid and/or injury management if required.
- Incident response must include reporting and recording of incident details in a timely manner.
- Ongoing risk management and risk reduction practices should form the basis of all incident management.
- For incidents that involve a person in police care or custody, the Work Unit Manager is responsible for ensuring that incident reporting and recording has occurred.

3.2 *Responsibilities of the affected person*

- Employees affected by an incident must complete the relevant sections of the Incident Report on HR Assist within 24 hours of the incident. This may be done in consultation with the Health and Safety Representative (HSR), if required.
- Where the affected person is unable to complete the Incident Report themselves or is a member of the public (e.g. person in police care or custody, or visitor), Supervisors must complete the report on their behalf.

3.3 *Responsibilities of the Work Unit Manager or Supervisor*

As soon as practicable after an incident occurring, the Work Unit Manager must:

- Commence the OHS investigation process. This action may be reassigned to a Supervisor via the HR Assist Incident Investigation module. Refer to the Managers Guide to HR Assist OHS Incident Investigations for further information;
- Consider contacting Safety Operations to engage with a Safety Consultant, or contact the local HSR, who has OHS incident investigation competency and the authority to make recommendations relating to findings to prevent recurrences;
- Complete the Incident Investigation on HR Assist detailing what led to the incident occurring including contributing factors, and a review of existing controls. This action may be assigned to a Supervisor via the HR Assist Incident Investigation module;
- If it is a WorkSafe Victoria notifiable incident, include the WorkSafe Victoria Reference Number supplied by WorkSafe Victoria on HR Assist, if known;
- Consult and involve relevant people in the investigation, including the affected person (if possible) and the HSR as required;
- Consider the systems of work, hours of work, work environment, facilities, information or instructions provided and supervision at the time of the incident in any investigation of the incident;
- Make recommendations regarding implementation of workplace risk controls to minimize the likelihood of incident recurrence. **See VPM OHS Hazard and Risk Management** for further details on determining and implementing risk controls;
- Ensure causes and corrective actions identified are made known or circulated to employees in the workplace.

3.4 *Reporting requirements and additional documentation*

- Further to completing the Incident Report on HR Assist as detailed above, Work Unit Managers must complete the report and send copies as required if the affected person is:
 - A contractor - send a copy to their employer if requested; and
 - A member of the public - send a copy to Manager, Shared Services, Corporate Finance Department.
 - A person in police care or custody – send a copy to Custody Operations, SESC.

4. **Notifying Health and Safety Incidents to WorkSafe Victoria**

Notifiable incidents must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notifiable incidents are defined by s.37 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act) as:

- The death of a person (including but not limited to employees, contractors, visitors and persons in police care or custody);
- A person requiring medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance;
- A person requiring immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital;
- A person requiring immediate medical treatment for:
 - The amputation of any part of his or her body; or
 - A serious head injury; or
 - A serious eye injury; or
 - The separation of his or her skin from an underlying tissue (such as de-gloving or scalping); or
 - Electric shock; or
 - A spinal injury; or
 - The loss of a bodily function; or
 - Serious lacerations.
- The collapse or failure of plant, structure or building that may place employees at risk;
- An implosion, explosion, fire or escape of a substance that may pose a risk to employees;
- The fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or object.

The Work Unit Manager or Supervisor must preserve the site of a notifiable incident, ensuring it is not disturbed until a WorkSafe Victoria Inspector advises it is acceptable to do so, except where disturbing the site is necessary to:

- Protect the health and safety of any person in the workplace;
- Aid an injured person involved in an OHS incident, or
- Take essential action to make the scene safe or to prevent a further occurrence of a health and safety incident.

Where an incident is notifiable, Work Unit Managers must:

- Immediately contact WorkSafe Victoria on 132 360 and advise of incident and actions taken and obtain a reference number which should be recorded on HR Assist incident report and must be quoted on the WorkSafe Victoria Incident Notification Form;
- Upon receipt of the automated WorkSafe Victoria notification email, complete the online form requesting a copy be emailed to HSW-SAFETY-OPERATIONS-MGR PBEA within 48 hours.
- Where managers are unsure, contact the HRC Safety Consultant who can assist in determining whether the incident is notifiable. Where there is uncertainty, contact WorkSafe Victoria advisory on 132 360 (24/7) who will determine if considered notifiable.

5. Employee support

- Work Unit Managers or supervisors are to provide support and communicate with the affected employee and ensure that appropriate support services are provided to the injured employee. For example, Police Psychology Unit, Welfare Services, Injury Management Consultants or Health, Safety and Wellbeing Division.

- Managers are to maintain contact with affected employees if they are absent from work or on a Return to Work program; see VPM Management and Return to Work of Ill/Injured Workers for more information.
- Managers must ensure counselling is offered and encouraged to a member following an incident that involves a psychosocial risks in addition to application of Psychological First Aid and Peer Support. See **VPM OHS Hazard & Risk Management**.

6. Recordkeeping and access to information

- Work Unit Managers and supervisors should treat information collected as part of the Incident Report confidentially and only disclose it as far as necessary to complete their duties in accordance with these guidelines.
- Work Unit Managers should make a copy of the Incident Report available if requested to do so by a WorkSafe Victoria Inspector or the local Health and Safety Committee.
- HRC Safety Operations must maintain a central register of all WorkSafe Victoria notifiable incidents for the organisation.

First Aid

7. Purpose

It is important that Victoria Police has a comprehensive first aid programme to respond to health and safety risks in the workplace and community.

This policy outlines the first aid requirements and processes that are in place, including:

- the requirement for certain employees to hold a current certification:
 - members (including Protective Services Officers) and Police Custody Officers
 - First Aid Officers.
- provision of equipment.

8. First Aid Planning

8.1 *First Aid Risk Assessment*

- Work Unit Managers should use the First Aid Risk Assessment to determine first aid requirements for the workplace. This risk assessment should be reviewed annually or after significant workplace change that may impact its first aid needs.
- Upon completion of the assessment, the Work Unit Manager is responsible for implementing the necessary controls.
- Completed assessments should be forwarded to the relevant Health and Safety Committee or local management meetings for review.

8.2 *Provision of First Aid Kits*

- Work Unit Managers must provide the number, type and location of first aid kits required by the First Aid Risk Assessment.
- Work Unit Managers must ensure all first aid kits are replenished monthly and all contents are within their respective expiry dates.

- A Personal Protection Kit (PPK) must be allocated to and kept in each police vehicle. Work Unit Managers should ensure procedures are in place to ensure all PPKs are replenished as soon as any item is depleted/used and all contents are within their respective expiry dates.

9. First Aid Officer Responsibilities

- All workplaces, including workplaces with police members, are to have suitably trained First Aid Officers.
- Work Unit Managers are responsible for using the First Aid Risk Assessment to determine the number of First Aid Officers in their workplace.
- First Aid Officers are to be self-nominated, and in consultation with the Work Unit Manager attend the appropriate training. [See Section 13 for further details.](#)
- First Aid Officers are responsible for administering first aid to ensure the welfare of employees in the workplace.
- A First Aid Officer must consider his or her own safety when providing assistance. It is important to use and wear personal protective equipment, such as disposable gloves and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) masks as recommended by the person's first aid training. First Aid Officers must have regard to **VPM OHS Hazard and Risk Management**.
- Work Unit Managers are to ensuring First Aid Officers are reimbursed for Hepatitis B Immunization if required.
- After treating an injured person, First Aid Officers are to wash their hands thoroughly, with soap and warm running water for 20 seconds. Do not scrub skin or use hot water.
- When a First Aid Officer is unavailable or refuses to treat someone, the Work Unit Manager is to:
 - Ensure there is no immediate risk of further injury to themselves, the injured person or anyone else;
 - Call an ambulance if the injury is serious; and
 - Attempt to locate another First Aid Officer.
- First Aid Officers should be mindful that analgesics (e.g. paracetamol or aspirin) must not be part of a first aid kit or dispensed by a first aid officer. Only a medical practitioner (or occupational health practitioner, e.g. nurse, physiotherapist) may dispense medicine.

10. Recordkeeping

Work Unit Managers must ensure that first aid treatment in the workplace (including treatment of non-employees) is recorded on an Incident Report via HR Assist.

11. Information and Awareness

Work Unit Managers must communicate workplace specific first aid provisions to all relevant employees and contractors/visitors. This may be achieved by displaying:

- Names of First Aid Officers;
- Location of First Aid Kits on site and if applicable, First Aid Room; and

- Emergency First Aid contact details including name of nearest medical clinic/hospital.

12. Emergency Evacuations

In an emergency evacuation, the First Aid Officer (or suitably qualified employee delegated by the Area/Floor Warden), must:

- Collect a First Aid Kit when they hear the evacuation tones, if safe to do so;
- Report to the Area/Floor Warden and stand-by ready to assist in the evacuation. Provide First Aid if required. Follow the Area/Floor Warden's advice;
- If there are no injuries or assistance is not required, evacuate with the employees to the assembly area when advised to do so by the Area/Floor Warden; and
- If there are injuries, evacuate the injured person, if safe to do so, with assistance from the Area/Floor Warden or another employee, to the nearest fire exit; or remain with the injured person, if safe to do so, until help arrives to complete the evacuation.

13. Requirement to hold a current certificate

- The following employees must hold a current first aid qualification
 - Police members (including PSOs)
 - Police Custody Officers (PCOs)
 - First Aid Officers
- Work Unit Managers are to ensure First Aid Officers obtain a senior first aid qualification, with police members and PCOs obtaining at a minimum a basic first aid qualification.
- The specific qualification requirement will be nominated by the Chief Commissioner or their authorised delegate and specified on the Human Resource Department intranet site.
- To maintain a first aid qualification employees must successfully complete the nominated course every three years or as prescribed by the Chief Commissioner or authorised delegate.

14. Management of qualification – members and PCOs

14.1 Overview

- In line with Victoria Police's mission to help those in need of assistance and to protect life and property, and to meet community expectation, members and PCOs must obtain and maintain the nominated qualification to render first aid in case of an emergency in the workplace and community.
- In consultation with the Work Unit Manager, members and PCOs are responsible for booking into a first aid training session allocated to their respective region/department/command through HR Assist.
- First Aid qualification results must be recorded on HR Assist by the local Course Administrator responsible for training.
- Work Unit Managers are responsible for ensuring members and PCOs hold a current first aid qualification

14.2 *Obtaining and maintaining qualifications*

Members and PCOs must successfully complete all competencies of nominated course(s) to obtain and/or maintain their first aid qualification. For further details on the course and its competencies refer to the Human Resources Department intranet site.

14.3 *Competency assessment*

- A member or PCO assessed as not yet competent upon completion of their training course(s) will be deemed to have not qualified.
- A member or PCO must re-attend and successfully complete the course within 28 days in these circumstances.

14.4 *Lapse of qualifications*

- Where a qualification has lapsed as a result of absence from work the member/PCO is required to requalify within 28 days of returning to work.
- A member or PCO who is unable to attend and qualify due to exceptional circumstances is required to requalify within 28 days of the exceptional circumstances no longer existing.

14.5 *Non-compliance*

- A failure to comply with this policy will result in performance management and/or disciplinary action and any other management action considered appropriate.
- Where a member or PCO fails to comply with this policy the Work Unit Manager is responsible for managing the unqualified member/PCO and for taking appropriate action.

15. Management of qualification – First Aid Officers

- Work Unit Managers are to ensure First Aid Officers obtain and maintain the nominated first aid qualification. For further details refer to the Human Resources Department intranet site.
- In consultation with the Work Unit Manager, First Aid Officers must book into first aid training with the designated service provider.
- Work Unit Managers are responsible for arranging payment of first aid training for first aid officers.
- First Aid qualification results must be recorded on HR Assist by the local Course Administrator responsible for training.

Related documents

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- WorkSafe Victoria Compliance Code - First aid in the workplace (2008)
- Victoria Police Mental Health Review, May 2016
- VPM OHS Hazard and Risk Management
- VPM Management and Return to Work of Ill / Injured Workers
- WorkSafe Victoria – WorkSafe Victoria Incident Notification and WorkSafe Victoria Incident Notification Form

- First Aid Risk Assessment Form

Further advice and information

For further advice and assistance regarding this policy, contact the OHS Branch, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Division.

Update history

DATE UPDATED	SUMMARY OF CHANGE	FORCE FILE NUMBER
09/06/20	VPM OHS incident management consolidates and replaces VPMP OHS incident management, VPMG OHS incident reporting and investigation and VPMG First aid	FF – 118486 (drafts and PLO feedback) FF – 085816 (approval)
04/12/24	Amended to provide clarification regarding notifiable incidents in police custody.	FF-246047